

# HAMPTON VA

## NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

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## Hampton Council approves fiscal 2016 budget

May 13, 2015 - Hampton City Council approved the 2016 budget at its meeting Wednesday. Essentially, the total is less than half a percent smaller than the current year. The shares of spending for both city and schools are basically flat.

The budget totals \$450,464,300 and represents a decrease of 0.38% from the current year. Of that total, city operations would cost \$207 million; capital and debt for city and school projects, \$48 million; and school operations, \$195 million. The budget would maintain city service levels, continue to reinvest in the community and invest in the workforce without a general tax increase.

Few changes were made to the city manager's proposed budget. The "I Value" public input process involved more than 600 residents in meetings, online polling and online chats. Nine people spoke at the City Council's two public hearings on the budget.

Two user fees will be increased: The solid waste fee, which has not been increased in 10 years, will cost households an additional \$84.76 per year. Residents who participated in the input sessions preferred an increase to cutting services by 58 percent. A stormwater fee increase will cost households an extra \$10.08 a year and go toward projects that meet pollution mandates – and also help with flooding. Residents favored that spending increase by 79%.

Other tax and fee adjustments include a new boat license fee, which will range from \$20-\$150 annually, depending on the size of the boat. Non-motorized boats under 20 feet (such as kayaks and canoes) are exempt. The cigarette tax will increase by 5 cents per pack.

The city school system would receive funding equal to the current year, although the agreed-upon formula allocating revenues would have called for a slight decline. The School Board's budget calls for 3% raises for teachers.

City employees will receive 3% raises beginning in July under this budget. To ensure that the increase in gross salary makes it to take-home pay, the city will cover the full increase in insurance premiums for FY16. The budget allocates capital funding for breathing gear for firefighters, body cameras for police officers, as well as Council's strategic priorities for economic development and quality-of-life improvements for residents. Hampton will join with Poquoson to hire a coastal resiliency specialist to work collaboratively on regional efforts to mitigate flooding risks.

For more information, including details, see [hampton.gov/budget](http://hampton.gov/budget).

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